negotiate and modify VLAs more rapidly in response to changing market conditions. The role of the corporate reseller **130** may be sharply reduced, if not completely eliminated, by facilitating the direct communication between the publisher **110** and corporate customer **140**. The integration of the management of VLAs with electronic commerce in a user-friendly way presents a unique set of challenges, requiring a new and novel solution.

Please replace the paragraph from page 6, line 10 to page 7, line 7 with:

Referring now to **Figure 3**, wherein a block diagram illustrating the functional components of the AVLA method and apparatus are shown. The functional components include an AVLA rules engine **310**, an AVLA pricing monitor **320**, an AVLA purchaser interface **330**, and an AVLA transaction database **340**. Some of the functions performed by the AVLA rules engine **310** include accessing the VLAs pulled from the AVLA Clearinghouse **210**, and extracting and maintaining the rules for automating the VLA, including, for example, the points credited for each product offered under the VLA, the number of points required for each discount step, and the percentage discount associated with each discount step. Some of the functions performed by the AVLA pricing monitor **320** include accessing the historical purchasing data for a requested product, determining whether the discount step is current, and modifying the discount step, if necessary, in conjunction with the AVLA rules engine **310** and the historical purchasing data. In one embodiment, another function of the AVLA rules engine is to further determine whether discount pricing is available based on a profile of the AVLA client/user **260** requesting the product, to insure that only the appropriate AVLA client/users **260** are able to view and purchase products at that discounted price. Some of the functions performed by the AVLA purchaser interface **330** include obtaining the current discount step from the AVLA pricing monitor **320**, and dynamically calculating and displaying the current price of a product in response to a purchase request by a AVLA client/user **260**. The AVLA purchaser interface **330** is also responsible for maintaining the historical purchase data on the AVLA transaction database **340** for each product purchased under a VLA, and for facilitating the transaction of the purchase in response to a request by a AVLA client/user **260**.

Please replace the paragraph on page 8, lines 12-26 with:

Referring now to **Figure 4**, wherein a block diagram of a general-purpose computer system upon which an embodiment of the present invention may be implemented is shown. As illustrated, general-purpose computer system **400** comprises a bus **401**, or other communications hardware and software, for communicating information, and a processor **402** coupled with bus **401** for processing information. Computer system **400** further comprises a random access memory (RAM) or other dynamic storage device **402** (referred to as main memory), coupled to bus **401** for storing information and instructions to be executed by processor **405**. Computer system **400** also comprises a read only memory (ROM) **403**, and/or other static storage device, coupled to bus **401** for storing static information and instructions for processor **405**. Mass storage device **404** is coupled to bus **401** for storing information and instructions. In one embodiment, mass storage device **404** includes a library of historical purchasing data and VLA rules used to automate the VLA under which the products are purchased by the various AVLA client/users **260**.

Please replace the paragraph on page 12, lines 1-15 with: